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# Religious Practice and Ceremonial Clothing on the Belcher Islands, Northwest Territories

by

Deborah Nancy Caseburg ©

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of MASTER OF SCIENCE

Department of Clothing and Textiles

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled Religious Practice and Ceremonial Clothing on the Belcher Islands, Northwest Territories submitted by Deborah Nancy Caseburg in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Clothing and Textiles.

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Date: October 4, 1993

Religious Practice and Ceremonial Clothing
on the Belcher Islands, Northwest Territories

ABSTRACT

Clothing is often invested with religious significance and therefore may serve as markers of the spirituality and status of those who wear them. Clothing also aids in promoting the authority of the religious leaders for the participants and observers. The wearing of specific dress is an integral part of fulfilling the practitioner's role. The objective of this research was to determine traditional clothing usage and design used by religious practitioners on the Belcher Island. Ethnographic research methods were used throughout the course of this study. Data was collected in the Belcher Islands using participant observation to document traditional clothing design and religion. Research indicated that traditional Inuit practitioners on the Belcher Islands did not wear distinct and unique apparel for the practice of their magico-religious beliefs. Communication with the spirit world was dependent on the individual instead of on specific objects. Contact with Euro-Canadians caused many societal changes, including modifications in clothing design, styles and uses. As well changes in traditional religious practices and religious garments are a result of non-native contact.

This study contributes to the body of knowledge about

shamanism and Inuit religion in Canada and in Sanikiluaq, N.W.T. It benefits the Inuit of Sanikiluaq by assisting them in the documentation of one aspect of their culture. The findings of this research may also be of interest to northern scientists, historians, religious scholars, ethnologists, museologists and human ecologists.

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# Religious Practice and Ceremonial Clothing on the Belcher Islands, Northwest Territories

## INTRODUCTION

Canadian Inuit have undergone tremendous change over the course of the past century (Bishop & Ray, 1976). The arrival of the Europeans in the north altered the aboriginal hunting and gathering way of life (Hail & Duncan, 1989). Modification of their hunting and gathering way of life led to changes in Inuit political, sociological, psychological, and religious structures, as well as in their clothing choices (Oakes, 1991a; Saladin d'Anglure, 1984). Clothing illustrates change within a culture since it reflects the culture's economy, technology, social structure, and religion (Horn, 1975). Specific features of Canadian Inuit clothing change over a period of time, creating new designs and modifications on old ones (Birket-Smith, 1929; Jenness, 1946). Variations in Inuit clothing design and construction are influenced by "social interactions with others, individual creativity, varying lifestyles, changes in socio-cultural environments, group identity, prestige, acceptance of traditional dress norms, and adoption of new materials" (Oakes, 1991e, back cover).

The relationship between clothing and religious expression is prevalent in many cultures (Eliade, 1972). Individuals react differently to an individual wearing

religious garments (Ryan, 1966), and the wearing of specific forms of dress is an integral part of fulfilling the practitioner's role (Jasper & Roach-Higgins, 1988). Since clothing is part of a set of expectations for behaviour that define a person's role within the social structure of a particular community (Jasper & Roach-Higgins, 1988), religious practitioners clothe themselves to inspire respect in other individuals. The specific clothing worn adds credibility and weight to their verbal instructions and spiritual leadership (Schmidt, 1989).

Historically, Eskimoans believed in the shaman as their spiritual leader (Oosten, 1976; Balikci, 1970; Eliade, 1972; Hawkes, 1916; Merkur, 1985). Certain Canadian Inuit groups are reputed to maintain traditional religious ties. For example, contemporary Inuit on the Belcher Islands still maintain some of their ties with the shaman, and weave shamanistic practices into their orthodox Christian worship (Remie, 1983; Leary, 1991). As well, the presence of a shaman in their midst is acknowledged (Leary, 1991).

Various cultural groups within the circumpolar and boreal forest regions of the northern hemisphere, including the Tofa (Dioszegi, 1960), Tungus (Overholt, 1986), Karagas (Dolgikh, 1978), Nganansan (Taksami, 1978), Hivkhi (Krader, 1978), Buryat (Kenin-Lopsan, 1978), Tuva (Zornickaja, 1978), Yakut (Lvova, 1978), Chulym Turks (Hajdu, 1978), Copper (Birket-Smith, 1945), Netsilik (Balikci, 1970), Iglulik (Rasmussen, 1929), Yupik (Morrow, 1984), Baffin Land (Boas, 1907), and

Caribou (Rasmussen, 1930) have documented examples of shamans' clothing. The shaman's costumes range from elaborately decorated garments worn by the Yakut (Lvova, 1978), Tofa (Dioszegi, 1960) and Tuva (Zornickaja, 1978), to virtually no clothing at all, except a headdress and belt with the Netsilik (Balikci, 1970). Whether the clothing is simple or elaborate, the items are distinct from the ordinary, everyday dress worn by the shamans when they are not involved in magico-religious rituals (Eliade, 1972).

## Purpose

The purposes of this study are:

To analyze the historical and contemporary factors that influence clothing and adornment used in religious practice and ceremony on the Belcher Islands in the practice of contemporary and traditional magico-religious beliefs.

To record historical and contemporary uses of personal clothing in ceremony and religious practice.

## Research Objectives

The objectives of this research are:

1. To determine the nature and extent of factors influencing changes in clothing styles and decorations used by religious practitioners in Sanikiluaq between 1900 and 1992.

2. To record and analyze changes in materials selected, rituals used to prepare clothing, construction techniques, and

pattern development of religious and ceremonial dress in Sanikiluaq.

3. To record ceremonial and religious clothing used in both traditional and contemporary practice, its usage, and the rituals associated with its preparation in Sanikiluaq.

4. To examine past and present religious structures within the Belcher Islands, and to examine clothing use in both practice and ritual.

## Justification

Inuit expressed a desire to document their traditional clothing. Community support was received for this project.

The shamanic dress of Sanikiluaq was chosen for this study for two reasons. Firstly, the ritual practice and ceremonial dress of Sanikiluaq is an important contribution to the understanding of Inuit in Canada. This study will help illustrate the relationship between clothing and religious expression, and the sociological factors that influence clothing choices. Secondly, documentation of religion and ceremonial dress preserves an aspect of Canadian Inuit heritage that may otherwise be lost. Little research has been conducted on clothing in this region (Turner, 1894; Hawkes, 1916; Saladin d'Anglure, 1984; Oakes, 1991a, 1991b, 1991c, 1991d), and even less has been conducted on the people's magico-religious beliefs (Saladin d'Anglure, 1984) and correlation with their dress.

This study contributes to the knowledge of religious practice and ceremonial dress of Inuit in Canada and in Sanikiluaq. Furthermore, it will benefit the Inuit of Sanikiluaq by assisting them with the documentation of one aspect of their culture. The study will provide a historical record for Inuit, future researchers, historians, museum curators, human ecologists and ethnologists.

## Assumptions

The primary assumption of this thesis is that elders' memories are accurate enough to provide detailed information about shamans' clothing worn in the past, and that information gathered from informants is truthful. Ray & Bishop (1976) note that memory ethnography is effective and accurate for short periods of time, usually 100 years or less. These authors also note that memory illicitation is an effective tool for recording historical events and patterns when consulting Canadian Inuit. Freeman (1976) concurs, stating the informant should be in his or her late teens when the information is stored in memory. Oral traditions are not directly subject to environmental constraints such as technological items. Distribution of folklore in a constant form is likely evidence of long retention. Historical material is also an indicator of accurate memory retention because of the small likelihood that information will be re-introduced when memory fades. Artifacts of shamans' clothing

and accessories are rare for this region of Canada. Artifacts were examined when possible on the Belcher Islands, but the primary basis of recording traditional clothing design and usage came from memories of the Inuit themselves.

Operational Definitions

Note: Unless otherwise cited, these definitions were developed by the author.

Accessories: articles that accompany the clothing in shamanic practice, making the entire costume complete. (See also paraphernalia).

Amulet: A charm often inscribed with a spell, magic incantation or symbol and believed to protect the wearer against evil or to aid the individual.

Balance: An element, influence or part that serves as a counterbalance or counterpart, especially to secure harmony, proportion and symmetry and to provide emotional equilibrium (Webster's, 1986).

Ceremonial: Marked by, involved in, or belonging to a ceremony. Marked by careful full and often elaborate attention to form and detail (Webster's, 1986).

Classified: Placing into various categories by function or purpose.

Clothing: Any body covering (Kaiser,1985)

Cosmography: A general description of the world of the universe, its interrelations and materials (Webster's, 1986).

Costume: The distinctive style and prevailing fashion of personal adornment including the style of wearing the hair, jewellery and apparel of all kinds characteristic of any period, country, class, occupation or occasion (Ryan, 1966).

Dualism: A theory that divides the world or a given realm of phenomena or concepts into two mutually irreducible elements or classes, the doctrine that the universe is under the dominion of two opposing principles, one of which is good and the other evil (Webster's, 1986).

Eskimoan: Term used to describe aboriginal people of the Circumpolar region, regardless of group affiliation.

Fetish: A natural or artificial object believed to have a supernatural power to protect or aid its owner, often because of ritual consecration or animation by a spirit.

Headlifting: Procedure performed by Eskimoans to predict the future, cure headaches and other illnesses, as well as being a shamanistic ritual. A belt is used to lift the head when the patient is lying down. The weight of the head will tell the holder of the belt what the problem is and what the possible cure will be.

Hierophany: The mysteries and sacrality (sacred presence) of a particular religion.

Magico-religious: Of belonging to, or having the character of a body of magical practices intended to cause a supernatural being to produce or prevent a specific result (Webster's, 1986).

Mandala: A graphic mystic symbol of the universe that is typically in the form of a circle enclosing a square and often bearing symmetrically arranged representations of deities. Used as an aid to meditation (Webster's, 1986).

Paraphernalia: Miscellaneous personal belongings or equipment that are employed by the shaman in the practice of magico-religious beliefs, including clothing, accessories and adornment.

Personal adornment: any form of bodily decoration or alteration (Kaiser, 1984).

Primary need: A particular physiological or psychological necessity that ranks first in order or importance for the well being of a community or an individual.

Prognostication: A prediction of something about to happen, an indication in advance, a premonition of something that is or may happen.

Prohibitions: A declaration or injunction forbidding an action. An order to restrain or stop.

Religious complexes: The body of institutionalized expressions of sacred beliefs, observances and social practices found within a given cultural context (Webster's, 1986).

Religious practitioner: One that practices a religion, or one who engages in the public practice of healing and applies it to human ills and problems (Webster's, 1986).

Ritual: The form of conducting a devotional service, especially as established by tradition. The prescribed order and words of a religious ceremony.

Ritual injunction: A prohibition or abomination against a particular event. When one is required to do or to refrain from doing a specific act.

Serrat (pl. serratit): Magical formula that is considered spiritual property of an individual (Merkur, 1987).

Shamanism: Practice of magico-religious beliefs by a shaman that often include, but are not limited to healing, foretelling the future, passing through an initiatory illness, ecstatic experience, guarantees of prosperous hunting, gathering and growing, communication with spirits not of this world, and the performance of divination. It is also a set of ideas, practices, ritual objects, and symbols associated with shamans (Oosten, 1976).

Spirit familiars: The shaman's helpers that aid the shaman in performances, curing, predicting the weather and his or her other assigned functions (Eliade, 1972).

Talisman: An object cut or engraved with a sign or character under various superstitious observances or influences of the heavens and thought of as a charm to avert evil and bring good fortune (Webster's, 1986).

Witchcraft complex: A series of acts or instances that employ sorcery, especially with malevolent intent. It involves magical rites and techniques and focuses on the individual rather than the community.

## Limitations

This research is limited to those clothing and textile artifacts that pertain to religious practice and ceremonial activity in the Belcher Islands. It may not provide an accurate view of general clothing trends in Sanikiluaq, nor be representative of ritual clothing worn by Canadian Inuit.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review covers three broad topic areas. The first section investigates literature related to various aspects of the Belcher Islands, including the history of the region, the people, social organization, clothing, and religious structure and cosmography. The second section explores literature related to traditional religion and circumpolar people. This provides the foundation for understanding traditional religious complexes associated with Canadian Inuit. The final section focuses on literature related to shamanic clothing used by Canadian Inuit shamans, with some references to other Eskimoan groups.

### Literature Related to the Belcher Islands

The following section provides a brief overview of the geography, history, people, clothing, and religion of Sanikiluaq and the Belcher Islands, Northwest Territories.

#### Territory

The Belcher Islands are located approximately 80 miles from the mainland of Northern Quebec in Southeastern Hudson's Bay at 56 degrees North and 79 degrees West (Winnipeg Art Gallery, 1981) (see map 1). The islands cover an area of approximately 2000 square miles and are composed largely of rocky terrain with no trees and little soil. Lichens and moss grow over the region and impart colour to the land. The

Map 1. Location of the Belcher Islands, N.W.T. (Credit: Author).

islands are covered with small ponds and lakes that offer nesting places for many different species of fowl (Winnipeg Art Gallery, 1981).

Sanikiluaq is the only permanent settlement on the Belcher Islands, and is the southernmost community in the Northwest Territories (Oakes, 1991a). The current population of the hamlet is approximately 500 people (Turner, 1991). Sanikiluaq is also the Inuktitut name now used for the Islands themselves, and refers to the legend of a famous hunter that could outrun a fox or a wolf (Winnipeg Art Gallery, 1991).

History

Archaeological evidence concludes that the Dorset culture existed on the Belcher Islands approximately 3000 years ago and that the Thule culture was in existence approximately 400 years ago (Saladin d'Anglure, 1984). The first known written reference made to the Belcher Islands was by Henry Hudson during his voyage in 1610 into what is now called Hudson's Bay (Flaherty, 1918). During the 1700's Hudson's Bay Company voyagers travelled throughout the region, and supplied information regarding the geographical position of the islands. During 1714 and 1724, Captain James Belcher commanded several ships on expeditions aimed at establishing trading posts is what is now northern Manitoba. The notes and logs of Captain Coats, also of the Hudson's Bay Company, refer to these Islands as the Belcher Islands (Winnipeg Art Gallery, 1981). Historically, the Inuit called the Island group "Khi-kuk-timee", and themselves either "Khi-kuk-timiut" or "Avetee-un-gi-uk-too-nuk-u-ee", meaning "the Islanders" (Twomey & Herrick, 1942) or "the people of the islands" (Winnipeg Art Gallery, 1981).

In 1749, The Hudson Bay Company established a trading post at Uniujack (Richmond Gulf), and in 1756, at Kuujjuaraapik (Great Whale River). These are both on the mainland, located east of the Belcher Islands. Inuit rarely travelled to the mainland to trade due to hazardous travel conditions in both winter and summer (Twomey & Herrick, 1942;

Freeman, 1961). Therefore, they had to be self sufficient. The first reported contact of Khikuktimiut with Europeans was with Flaherty in 1914 (Flaherty, 1918). It was not until the early 1960's that contact with outsiders became more frequent (Oakes, 1991a).

In 1928, the Hudson's Bay Company established a permanent post on Tukarak Island. Over the course of the next thirty years, government interest increased due to iron ore explorations. This began to increase commercial and industrial development. In 1961, a school was established on the Belcher Islands, and the Hudson's Bay post was relocated to the northern tip of Flaherty Island. Sanikiluaq was established in 1971 (Oakes, 1991a; Schwartz, 1976; Winnipeg Art Gallery, 1981).

## The People

The population on the Belcher Islands has grown from approximately 150 people in the early 19th century (Saladin d'Anglure, 1984), and 272 in 1972 (Schwartz, 1976). Today, almost half of the residents are under the age of 19, and the community is experiencing a population explosion (Turner, 1991).

The current inhabitants of the Belcher Islands are direct descendants of the Ungava Inuit of the Northern Coast of Labrador (Twomey & Herrick, 1942; Oakes, 1991a). The Islands were populated by a series of migrations which were often

caused by the Inuit leaving the mainland due to threats of danger. Twomey (1942) described one migration that occurred after two traders attacked an Inuit group on the mainland while the men were away hunting. When the men returned, they tracked down the two traders and had them killed. Another trader attempted to stop the conflicts before they got out of hand, and set out to visit the Inuit with a band of Swampy Cree Indians. The Inuit heard of their impending arrival and fled to the Islands (Oakes, 1991a; Winnipeg Art Gallery, 1981). During the 1930's, the last large migration of Ungava Inuit occurred. The Island population had been decimated due to an epidemic, and the Islanders went to the mainland to recruit people to help repopulate the region.

## Clothing

Historically, Khikuktimiut on the Belcher Islands depended largely on caribou and seal skins for clothing (Oakes, 1991d). In the 1880's, the caribou on the Islands disappeared, due to a crust of ice that developed over the moss and lichens. The caribou could not break through the ice to reach their food source, and eventually starved to death (Flaherty, 1918). Trade with the mainland was difficult and caribou also found it difficult to cross the unstable ice bridge in the winter and migrate to the Islands. As a result, Inuit found substitutes for the caribou, and began making clothing out of polar bear skins, fish, guillemot, and eider

ducks (Saladin d'Anglure, 1984). During the 1960's increased contact with outsiders changed Inuit lifestyles. The need for skin clothing was reduced and more trade goods were incorporated into their clothing (Oakes, 1991c, 1991d).

The same clothing style characterized all the Ungava Inuit in Northern Quebec. Variations were due to availability of materials and individuals performance or preference (Saladin d'Anglure, 1984). The family of a proficient hunter had more choice in skins used for clothing construction and more skins to trade for other trade goods.

The women's parka or 'amautik' is characterized in the Sanikiluaq area by an elongated curved hood (Oakes, 1990). Front and back tails were traditionally used on the amautik, with the back tail being longer than the front (Oakes, 1990; Saladin d'Anglure, 1984). Men's parkas are similar to the women's, with a narrower hood, wider sleeves, and an absence of tails at the back and front (Oakes, 1990; Saladin d'Anglure, 1984).

Parkas were also ornamented with amulets and talismans made of wood, ivory, or animal parts. These were replaced by imported beads and tin upon increased contact with outsiders. For ceremonial clothing, summer caribou was preferred (Saladin d'Anglure, 1984). Summer caribou skins are softer and thinner, therefore providing less warmth for the wearer.

Religion

The Khikuktimiut had their own religious system of beliefs and traditions, which were maintained until contact with Euro-Canadians and missionaries. Shamans were the primary religious leader on the Belcher Island and the Ungava Peninsula. They employed helping spirits and had the same functions as those in other Eskimoan groups (Turner, 1894). After contact, both the shaman and the Inuit themselves submitted to Euro-Canadian conventions and participated in Christian practices. After 1930, there were no openly publicized shamans practising the old traditions in Northern Quebec. On the Belcher Islands, Arnaitualuk, the local shaman, gathered all his campmates together and allowed them to witness the dismissal of his four spirit helpers so that he could become a Christian (Saladin d'Anglure, 1984). Most of the people were baptized. However, interpretations of the Bible remain loose and at times, these interpretations are integrated into new shamanic practices (Saladin d'Anglure, 1984; Leary, 1991). Today, the majority of Khikuktimiut on the Belcher Islands subscribe to the Anglican faith. The community has a church and Aboriginal lay ministers, and a priest travels to the Islands from the mainland every few months (Oakes, 1991f).

Religious fervour took hold of the people on the Belcher Islands in 1941. A bible, written in syllabics, had been left on the Islands and was being used in interpretive worship

services. Two individuals claimed to be God and Jesus Christ. Most of the Inuit believed them but three disbelievers were murdered. Shortly after, women and children were ordered naked onto the ice floe to meet Jesus as He returned from a hunting trip. Six froze to death as they stood waiting. In total, nine individuals died in this region as a result of this incident (Saladin d'Anglure, 1984; Ferraber, 1972; Phillips, 1956; MacDonald, 1970). There were other incidents of religious confusion in Northern Quebec between the 1920's and 1950 that point to religious fervour gripping individuals in different communities. Saladin d'Anglure (1984) feels that these syncretic religious movements throughout the area are almost always accompanied by food, clothing and sexual taboos that are based on a combination of Biblical and ancient Inuit traditions and that these movements cannot be fully understood unless one possesses a knowledge and understanding of shamanism, traditional identity, and reincarnation. Because of the religious confusion and resulting tragedy, evangelists are not welcomed into Sanikiluaq like they are in other Canadian Inuit communities. When they persist in contacting or trying to convert the Khikuktimiut to their faith, they are usually ignored (Oakes, 1991f; Leary, 1991).

## Literature Relating to Traditional Eskimoan Religion

The following summary of traditional Canadian Inuit religion includes examples from specific groups (Merkur, 1985; Oosten, 1976, 1981, 1986; Kan, 1991). Variations exist between Eskimoan groups (see Appendix 2).

### Importance of Traditional Religions

The study of religion emphasizes that religions are necessary for the well being of the social structure of a group of people (Kluckhom, 1979). Historically, for individuals of the oldest and most archaic groups, the "very fact of living in the world has a religious value" (Eliade, 1976, p. 21). Malinowski (1979) states that a trend occurs with people historically. People realize through their experience and logic, that their knowledge is supreme once set in definite boundaries. Yet individuals also realize that beyond these limits, there is nothing that can be done by typical means to change a situation; however, although individuals realize their own helplessness and vulnerability, there is rebellion against inaction, because of strong emotion or desire. Furthermore, inaction is not always possible, depending on the situation. This realization leads to magic and religion. The creation of this magico-religious complex satisfies primary needs of individuals within a culture (Lessa & Vogt, 1979). By practising magic and religion, people feel that they have control over the inexplainable occurrences in

daily life.

According to Rasmussen's records compiled during the Fifth Thule Expedition (1921-1924), the Polar Inuhuit believed that the function of religion was "to keep a right balance between mankind and the rest of the world" (1929, p. 62). The concept that there are forces that must be appeased, and that these forces lie beyond the Inuhuit sphere of control is noted by their observance of spiritual laws "in order to keep the world up, in order to keep the world in balance. For the powers which we do not know must not be offended" (Rasmussen, 1938, p. 68.) The Netsilik Inuit also noted the desire for equilibrium, stating "we are careful about the forces that keep mankind and earth in balance" (Rasmussen, 1931, p. 500). This concern relating to the keeping of the balance in life emphasises that historically with Canadian Inuit, humanities' counterparts lay in a mysterious realm that was found in the spiritual world (Merkur, 1987). Inuit religion is essentially animistic, with all things being accorded with a spiritual nature (Oosten, 1981).

In considering the concept of dualism and balance, Eskimoan religion can be divided into three distinct sections (Merkur, 1985). Firstly, are traditional observances made up of requirements and prohibitions, that focus on the daily activities of the people such as birth, death, and hunting. These observances are usually preventive in nature, and are designed to maintain the balance of the world. As well as

taboos and ritual injunctions that are characteristic of traditional observances, the Eskimoans also classified amulets to ward off evil spirits. Minor sacrifices, various feasts, and magical songs designed to aid in achieving certain desires were also employed (Merkur, 1985).

Secondly, the shaman, is an important part of the religious structure believed in by Eskimoans, since he or she knows the measures that would have to be taken to restore the balance of the world (Merkur, 1985). For example, if the Caribou Inuit experience a shortage of game, it is result of an individual's transgression towards a particular spirit. The shaman would then seek out the individual, administer punishment, and game would then again become abundant (Rasmussen, 1930). The shaman and shamanism itself is also one of the most conspicuous features of traditional Canadian Inuit religion (Oosten, 1981). The actions of this religious practitioner are considered a "socially licit and responsible practice" (Merkur, 1987, p. 281).

The third section of Eskimoan religion is the witchcraft complex, which is considered an illicit magico-religious practice (Merkur, 1987). Witchcraft possesses many similarities to shamanism, in that the witch may be either male or female; witchcraft, like shamanism is taught in secret; and payment, in some form, is made to the teacher. Unlike shamanism, the practices of witchcraft and the identities of witches are kept secret. Witchcraft practices,

in opposition to the other two divisions of traditional religion, focus on deliberate practices that disrupt the balance of the world to achieve goals that could not be attained through traditional observances of shamanism (Merkur, 1987). This disruption of balance is considered a danger for the entire community, and not only an episode between the witch and the victim. The shaman is particularly liable to be accused of witchcraft, because shamanism requires specialization in magical techniques (Oosten, 1981). This relationship between witchcraft and shamanism may act as a control against abuse of power by the shaman (Oosten, 1981). Witchcraft practices were not confined to the shaman, since all Inuit were capable of practising witchcraft (Oosten 1986).

## Shamanism and Shamanic Trends

Shamanism is defined as "a set of ideas, practices, ritual objects, and symbols associated with shamans" (Oosten, 1981, p. 84). Shamanism is usually found in hunting and gathering societies where ceremonies are performed on a non-calendrical basis corresponding with the needs and desires of the people (Turner, 1989). While the actual practice of shamanism is primarily concerned with healing practices, the ideology of shamanism centres on the themes of ecstatic journeys to visit spirits of the dead, the sea, and the moon, and the procuring of game (Oosten, 1981). The entire shamanic complex (except for the rare exception of ecstasies for

personal reasons) is concerned with the restoration of balance of mankind and the well being of the community (Merkur, 1987).

Essentially, shamanism functions to join the masculine and feminine worlds; the natural and human spheres; and the living with the dead spirits occupying the otherworld (Saladin d'Anglure, 1984). Firth (in Turner, 1987, p. 87) states that "shamanism is the particular form of spirit mediumship, in which a specialist [the shaman], normally a medium, is deemed to exercise developed techniques of control and spirits, sometimes including mastery of spirits believed to be possessing another medium".

In general, the characteristics of the shamanic complex can be summarized as follows: healing through the employment of a trance state; the interpretation of dreams and visions; guiding the souls of the dead; prognostication; offering sacrifices to various spirits; and the initiation of new shamans (Grim, 1983). These shamanic characteristics are wide spread throughout the literature (Grim, 1983; Eliade, 1972; Merkur, 1985; Oosten, 1976,1981, 1986; Bogaras, 1979; Rasmussen, 1929, Needham, 1979). It is stressed that the

> "shamanistic complex cannot be studied as an isolated phenomenon. It was an integral part of Inuit religion. The activities of the angakut were only meaningful within the religious context " (Oosten, 1981, p. 89).

Magic and Magical Beliefs

A belief in magic has it's roots in the emotions and the imagination of the individual (Hill & Williams, 1989). Frequently, magical rituals attempt to influence the workings of nature by means of some symbolic representation of the forces of nature (Hill & Williams, 1989).

Canadian Inuit have an extensive belief in the magical power of words. A serrat (pl. serratit) is a magical formula that is considered spiritual property, that can be bought, sold or inherited. Serratit could be used either for curses on individuals or to bring luck and better a situation (Merkur, 1987). These magical formulas can either be secret, or accessible to everyone, depending on the intended purposes. If the serrat was of an evil nature and intended to curse an individual, the serrat was indicative of witchcraft. No further activity was required for the witchcraft to be effective (Merkur, 1987; Rasmussen, 1929, 1930, 1931; Holtved, 1967; Rink, 1974). The shaman was required to remove the curse of the serrat (Merkur, 1987), emphasizing his or her role in restoring the balance of the world. Some Inuit groups depending serratit on include the Iglulik (Rasmussen, 1929; Merkur, 1987), Caribou (Rasmussen, 1930; Merkur, 1987), Netsilik (Rasmussen, 1931; Merkur, 1987) and Copper (Rasmussen,1932; Merkur, 1987).

Canadian Inuit also have a series of homeopathic, or imitative magical beliefs. These enforce taboos on

individuals because of the imagery associated with an act may have repercussions on an individual at a later point in life, or the use of them may be to imitate a desired event in the future. For example, on Baffin Land, boys were prohibited from playing cat's cradle, a popular string game. People believed that the tangling of the fingers within the string resulted in the boy when he is a whaler, becoming tangled in the harpoon line when whaling (Frazer, 1979). A second example of homeopathic magic, in the Bering Strait region, relates to aspects of fertility and childbirth. A barren woman, who wishes to have a son, will consult a shaman who will make or have her husband make, a small doll. The shaman will then perform secret rites over the doll, and the woman will be ordered to sleep with the doll under her pillow (Frazer, 1979). The doll is meant to represent her unborn child, and if the ritual is successful, the woman soon becomes pregnant.

## The Shaman

The shaman can be either male or female, depending on the cultural group, and is a "cultural practitioner whose powers come from direct contact with the supernatural, by divine stroke, rather from inheritance or memorized ritual" (Lessa & Vogt, 1979, p. 301). A shaman is a

> "medium and diviner, differs from common men in general, and is sometimes said to resemble a witch because he can deal in the realm of the supernatural, and travel to the world beyond where

he can meet souls and spirits in their own territory" (Howells, 1989, p. 98).

The word shaman is derived from the Tungus word "saman" (Eliade, 1972) which means "he or she who knows" (Brennan, 1993, p. 25). Rasmussen popularized the use of the word in his academic writings following the Fifth Thule Expedition (Oosten, 1976). The Inuktitut word angakkoq or angatkoq (pl. ankakkut) is usually translated as shaman (Oosten, 1981). Thalbitzer (1928) claims the word is derived from 'angak', which means 'mother's brother', and the suffix 'kkuq', meaning 'member of the family'.

The functions of the shaman are similar in some Inuit groups. For example, the Copper and Caribou Inuit believe the shaman must act as a physician and cure the sick; be a meteorologist by controlling and predicting the weather; ensure good weather for hunting; engage in spiritual hunting and find game for the people to kill; travel to the Land of the Dead and look for lost or stolen souls of the people and return them to their rightful owners; and perform magic in such a manner so as to astonish and convince people of the sacred world (Rasmussen, 1929). The Netsilik and Iglulik in the area between Gjoa Haven and Iglulik felt the important tasks of the shaman were to rid the community or the individual of evil spirits, influence the weather to ensure good hunting, find animals for the hunters' kill in times of scarcity, and cure the sick (Oosten, 1981). The Arviligyuarmiut of Pelly Bay (Remie, 1983) and the Yuit of the

Pacific Coast (Morrow, 1984) report similar functions that are performed by their shamans. The functions of the shaman then, generalized over a series of Canadian Inuit groups, are to ensure the well being of the community as a whole, except in times of illness, or for the raising of the shaman's status in the community. Furthermore, no matter how great and spectacular the performances are, the worth of the shaman's power lies predominantly in the ability to cure the ill, and to foresee the future, especially for instances of hunting (Saladin d'Anglure, 1984). The shaman is consulted on nearly all the important undertakings of life so that the spirits that will ensure the successful outcome of events are managed (Turner, 1989; Oosten, 1976, 1981, 1986; Kan, 1991; Howells, 1979; Rollman, 1985).

The shaman is considered to be the "vessel...of the transhuman entity" (Turner, 1989, p. 87), therefore being the intermediary between humans and the supernatural beyond (Ivanov, 1978). However, while the importance and dominance of the shaman are unquestionable, nowhere does he or she monopolize all that is sacred, nor all the religious experiences of a particular group (Eliade, 1972). The shaman is often the centre of traditional Eskimoan religion (Kan, 1991; Remie,1983; Oosten, 1976, 1981, 1986; Merkur, 1985), and that the shaman is considered a responsible person with the necessary skills to perform successfully in the capacity assigned to them (Murphy, 1969).

Canadian Inuit shamans are established in different ways. The role of the shaman can be generational, that is, the role can be passed down from parent to child; the collective groups can choose a child and groom the young novice to become a shaman; or the spirits themselves can choose the individual, with the communities wishes deferring to those of the gods (Merkur, 1985). Regardless of how the shaman is established, the period of initiation and training the novice must endure remains the same (Merkur, 1985; Eliade, 1972; Oosten 1976, 1981, 1986; Overholt, 1986; Grim, 1983; Pandian, 1991).

The special terminology and magical tricks of the shaman are known to everyone. Rather than the words and antics creating the shaman, it is the application of the words and manipulations in conjunction with the control and confrontation of spirits that make the shaman successful (Oosten, 1981). This control and confrontation with the spirits are the major parts of the learning process and the initiatory period of the novice. Once an individual is chosen to become a novice, the future shaman begins the training process. The novice falls under the tutelage of an experienced shaman within the community. If there is no active shaman in the community, a shaman from a nearby community may be asked to instruct the novice (Howells, 1989). While the future shaman must be proficient in all the tricks, songs, incantations, and rituals that make up the tangible aspects of the shaman's performances, these are considered

public knowledge, and do not make up the most important aspects of the training (Oosten, 1981).

The most important aspect for the apprentice is the contact with the spirit world. Pandian (1991, p. 96) briefly explains the initiation period as follows:

> "After a period of isolation that connotes "ritual death" during which he or she undergoes an "existential transformation", the individual is initiated as a confirmed shaman, the initiate may experience his or her journey to the world of the spirits, where his or her body is dismembered and put together after a period of physical abuse and torture by the spirits; the initiate returns with a new body and with new knowledge acquired through such an experience."

According to Eliade (1972) the traditions that determine the future shaman's vocation all include suffering, death, and resurrection. The Ammasalik East Greenlanders state that a bear or a glacier will devour the novice's flesh, and turn the initiate into a skeleton, causing death. The flesh is recovered, the novice awakens, and the novice's clothes come back to him (Weyer, 1932). The Labrador Inua use Tongarsoak (The Great Spirit) who appears as a polar bear and eats the novice (Weyer, 1932). This reduction of the body to a skeleton is characteristic of circumpolar shamanic initiation (Eliade, 1972), and aids in summoning and controlling the spirits. Once a novice has gained control of a helping spirit, they can actively practice the art of shamanism. This spirit will help the shaman in practising his or her art and in collecting more helping spirits.

The limits of the shaman's powers are set by group

recognition (Saladin d'Anglure, 1984). If the shaman is not considered able to perform , and proficient in the execution of the necessary tasks, the shaman is essentially powerless. The status of Netsilik and Iglulik Inuit shamans can vary greatly. Some are highly praised, while others are strongly ridiculed, depending on the tasks they perform (Oosten, 1981). This prestige is dependent on many factors, including control over helping spirits, and success in the treatment of patients. The most important function that relates to the level of status and prestige is the shaman's "skill in the manipulation of group processes and ...[the] ability to coordinate and integrate emotional and cognitive tensions within the total cognitive framework of Inuit culture (Oosten 1981, p. 94). The decrease in the ability to perform these functions contributed to the decline in Canadian Inuit shamans and shamanic activity.

## The Decline of Inuit Shamanism in the Post Contact Era

Shamanism spread from Asia to the Canadian Inuit before the first contact with Western explorers (Thalbitzer, 1928), and shamanism was "an intrinsic part of Inuit religion when the first Western explorers arrived in the Arctic" (Oosten, 1986, p. 118). The missionaries' reaction to the shamans can only be described as one of horror and disgust, and forceful efforts were made to convert Canadian Inuit to Christianity.

> "Appalled by the shaman's appearance, his use of various material objects ("idols", "fetishes"), and

> especially the dramatic trance he entered in order to do his job, missionaries often referred to him as a "servant of Satan" and saw him as an epitome of heathenism" (Kan, 1991, p. 369-70).

Shamanism practiced by Canadian Inuit was seen by Christian missionaries as one of the worst manifestations of paganism (Kan, 1991). Encounters with European missionaries led to a

> "radical transformation of the native religious traditions, and influenced by economic and political sanctions, to the adoption of a piestic belief system, which often clashed with the psychological and cultural presuppositions of the Inuit world view" (Rollman, 1985, p.254).

The shamans initially protested and resisted the missionary pressure to convert to Christianity (Kan, 1991). Therefore, the shamanic complex did not disappear as quickly or completely as missionary diaries and documents may suggest (Remie, 1983). The shamans conducted their own anti-Christian campaigns and took their activities underground to escape detection by the Christians (Kan, 1991). At the time of initial contact with the missionaries, shamans adopted crosses and other religious artifacts from Christianity and incorporated these into their own performances (Kan, 1991). Shamans also began to imitate Christian church services (Kan, 1991). Some shamans who were baptized continued traditional religion and practices. Conversion often included the use of humiliation and brute force.

The shamans gradually surrendered their roles and religious practices due to their own inabilities, and their

subsequent lack of strength as perceived by community members (Kan, 1991). The shaman's decline is traced to the lack of ability to cure the new devastating diseases brought by Europeans, religious persecution and resultant humiliation, and the lack of control over his or her community. All these factors caused the shaman to become irrelevant to the social and religious life of the community (Kan, 1991).

## Literature Related to Shamanic Clothing, Adornment, and Accessories

Much of the research on shamans' clothing was conducted in various regions of Siberia (Potapov, 1978; Taksami, 1978; Graceva, 1978; Djakanova, 1978; Dolgikh, 1978; Dioszegi, 1960; Overholt, 1986). There are few ethnographies on Canadian Inuit shamanism that examine the clothing worn by shamans in detail, but researchers do indicate the presence of special clothing and accessories for the practice of magico-religious activities (Balikci, 1970; Rasmussen, 1929, 1930, 1931, 1938; Hawkes, 1916; Eliade, 1972; de Laguna, 1987; Saladin d'Anglure 1983, 1984; Morrow, 1984).

An examination of the role clothing plays in religious expression follows, as well as a description of the clothing, adornment, and accessories worn by shamans in various circumpolar groups. The rites and rituals involved in the preparation and consecration of shamans' magico-religious clothing provide insight into the importance of clothing used in religious practice. This section concludes with a description of the symbolism ascribed to particular articles of shamans' clothing.

### Clothing as a Means of Religious Expression.

The correlation between clothing and religious expression exists in many cultures (Eliade, 1972). Clothing is often

invested with religious meanings and carries significance for the spirituality of the wearers (Schmidt, 1989). The authority of religious leaders is fostered through various forms of dress and undress. Religious practitioners clothe themselves in a manner which inspires respect. This adds credibility and weight to verbal instructions and performances (Schmidt, 1989). Jasper & Roach-Higgins (1988) state that specific forms of religious dress are necessary for the fulfilment of the religious practitioner's role. The fulfilment of clothing expectations can facilitate interaction with the members of a community (Stone, 1962). Several researchers have linked the use of dress to the fulfilment of enacting one's roles (Bush & London, 1960; Goffman, 1959;Joseph, 1986; Sarbin & Allen, 1968).

All individuals occupy a social position of one type or another within society. Individual's then conform to group norms associated with that role's positions, including norms of dress (Sarbin & Allen, 1968). All clothing, including religious attire, offers a powerful channel of communication through which messages are conveyed (Schmidt, 1989). Eliade (1972) states that the

> "shamans' costume itself constitutes a religious hierophany and cosmography; it discloses not only a sacred presence but also cosmic symbols and metaphysic itineraries. Properly studied, it reveals the system of shamanism as clearly as do the shaman's myths and techniques" (p. 145).

Both Schmidt (1989) and Jasper & Roach-Higgins (1988) concur, stating that rituals demand special forms of dress,

and that "dress is a vital part of the complex system of communication involved in ritual" (Schmidt, p. 46). Clothing enhances the social position and authority of the shaman. It is also a necessary part of the magico-religious complex involved in ritual enactment and procedure.

## Shaman's Clothing

Shaman's costume and accessories illustrate a wide range of differences within the same ethnic group. For example, Dioszegi's (1960) study of shamans' clothing worn by the Tofa (Karagas) of Siberia indicates diversity in the type and design of the clothing and accessories worn by the Tofa shamans. This is also applicable to one shaman's ritual wardrobe in one small isolated community. Dioszegi (1978) notes the use of different drums, amulets and idols in human form, used by a shaman of the Barbara Turks during the Islamic period in the 16th Century A.D. A wide range of headdresses were also used through the course of the same shaman's life, with each headdress differing considerably from the others in his collection. Overholt (1986) agrees with this diversity, emphasizing that there are "no absolutely similar complexes of paraphernalia observed in the individual cases of shamanism, even within the same ethical unit, and within the limits of the same theoretical construction/cultural type" (p.183).

The reasons for diversity in Siberian culture are mainly attributed to the individual complex of spirits that each

shaman has (Overholt, 1986). The shamanic complex observed by Canadian Inuit involves the participation of various spirits, with individual shamans creating their own spirit collection. Specifically, shamans of the Netsilik and Iglulik Inuit, (Oosten, 1976), Nunivak Yuit, St. Lawrence Island Yuit, Baffin Land Inuit, Polar Inuhuit, Mackenzie Delta Inuvialuit, and Icy Cape Inupiaq (Merkur, 1985) all build spirit collections (see Table 1).

There is a correlation between status and prestige and the number of clothing and accessory items a shaman owns. This is shown in the diversity of clothing articles, and the amount of decoration on them. Dioszegi (1960) and Eliade (1972) both state that with an increase in status, there is an increase in the number and variety of garments and accessories used shamans. Overholt (1986) notes that the

> "paraphernalia [of which costume is an integral part] are needed for the performance, and without them the effectiveness of the shaman would decrease to such an extent that it would lose it's functional "value" and would naturally be given up as a complex...together with the increase of the curative power of the shaman there is usually an increase in the paraphernalia...the richer the paraphernalia, the more influential the shaman " (p. 183).

Both Overholt (1986) and Eliade (1972) found that shaman's costumes, including those of the Tungus, Tova, Tofa, Yakut, Buryat, and Altaic groups of Siberia, consists of one or more of the following: coat, apron, trousers or breeches, knee protectors, and shoes. The types of ornamentation signify the purpose and power of the clothing. Eliade (1972)

notes that decoration of these shaman's costumes is elaborate, with heavy metal ornamentation and illustrated anthropomorphic figures embroidered or appliqued to the parkas.

Canadian Inuit shamanic clothing is only briefly mentioned briefly in several ethnographies. Generally, little attention is given to recording exact details of the various parts of the costume. Canadian Inuit shamans wore all or a combination of the following, depending on the region: parkas, belts, headdresses, footwear, browbands, and gutskin raincoats. In some instances across Canada, Inuit practised their shamanic techniques naked. Much of the initiatory period is spent naked by the novice, and Eliade (1972) states that some shamanic performances are performed naked. References to naked Canadian Inuit shaman's are found in Merkur (1985), Rasmussen (1927, 1929), Eliade (1972), and Oosten (1976). After initiation, the clothes fly through the air to the novice so that he or she may dress (Merkur, 1985; Rasmussen, 1927).

Belts were often used in the practice of shamanism, and were the most important tool in various groups. Belts are one of the few articles described in great detail in the literature. Belts are worn by the Netsilik Inuit, (Balikci, 1970; Hall, 1992; Rasmussen, 1927; Birket-Smith, 1945; Oosten, 1976), Iglulik Inuit, (Boas, 1901, 1907; Rasmussen, 1929, 1930; Merkur, 1985) Copper Inuit, (Birket-Smith, 1945) and Caribou Inuit (Rasmussen, 1927, 1930; Birket Smith, 1929).

The Netsilik Inuit belt is made from the white underbelly fur of the caribou (Balikci, 1970) or brown caribou fur (Hall, 1992). It is given to the novice upon his/her formal initiation into the art of shamanism. The belt was made from leather, and decorated with caribou skin fringe (Oosten, 1978).

Amulets were often hung from the belt (Rasmussen, 1927), as individuals requiring the shaman's services gave an amulet to the shaman in exchange for the services provided (Hall, 1992).

Iglulik Inuit (Boas, 1901, 1907; Merkur, 1985) used a belt made from a strip of hide with many caribou skin fringes attached to it. The caribou skin fringes were given to the shaman by all the people that he or she knows. As well as fringes, "small carvings [are added], human figures made of bone, fishes [and] harpoons" (Rasmussen, 1929, p. 114). The waistbelt is also used for headlifting.

Rasmussen (1927) describes the attachments of the special belt worn by the female shaman Kinalik of the Caribou Inuit.

> "A piece of gun butt, which she had to carry because she had become a shaman through 'death visions', i.e. death by shooting
> A piece of sinew thread, which had held two tent poles fast and had been used for qilaneq
> A piece of ribbon that had once been tied round a piece of tobacco she had been presented with; she was welcome to smoke the tobacco herself, but the ribbon that had been round the gift acquired miraculous powers, when placed on the shaman's belt.
> A piece of the cap of Qaluherauit, her dead brother.
> Hermerzihuit's feet, a polar bear that was her helping spirit.
> A piece of knitted vest that had belonged to a

white man.
A caribou tooth
Mittens of caribou skin
A piece of skin from a seal flipper
All of the components of the belt were gifts".(p. 56-57).

Anyone is capable of performing qilaneq, but the shaman will perform the procedure when he or she is available. A second item that is frequently mentioned in the performance of the shamanic ritual is the gutskin parka or raincoat. It is worn by the Labrador Inuit (Hawkes, 1916), Norton Sound Inupiaq (Jacobson, 1977), Bering Straight Inupiaq (Nelson, 1899), North Alaskan Inupiaq (Hawkes, 1916), Kodiak Yuit (Lisiansky, 1814), Nunivak Yuit (Lantis, 1946) and Kuskokwin Yuit (Nelson, 1899).

Animal skin parkas are also mentioned as part of the shamanic costume. The Copper Inuit shaman's parka is described as made out of fur. Saladin d'Anglure's (1983) study of an Iglulik Inuit shaman's coat, C. 1900, which is found in the Museum of Natural History, New York, provides details of the construction of the coat along with photographs. The parka is made of brown caribou fur, is hoodless, and has a scalloped bottom edge with a deep "V" at both the centre front and back. White caribou fur hands adorn both the left and right side of the chest, and there is a dark stylized human figure on a white ground square just below the throat region at centre front. There are three stylized circles at the front midsection and one at centre back. All four circles have a dark stylized sunburst

radiating from the centre and a series of tassels emerge from each circle as well. There are two stylized animals, meant to represent caribou, at the left and right back shoulder blades. Each animal has two sets of fringes just below its feet. Mitts and a hat are also worn with this ensemble. The use of the parkas, with special reference to the hood of the garments being pulled over the shaman's head during performances, can be found in the following groups; Netsilik (Oosten, 1976), Copper, Caribou, and Baffin Land Inuit (Merkur, 1985).

Other garments are mentioned as characteristic of the Canadian Inuit shaman's paraphernalia. The Labrador Inuit shaman wears a blindfold (Turner, 1894). Browbands or headbands are worn by Netsilik Inuit (Birket-Smith, 1945), Northern Alaskan Inupiaq (Spencer, 1959) and Baffin Land Inuit (Boas, 1907). On Baffin Land the headband is decorated with many strips of skin. Each strip represents an illness cured by the shaman during headlifting (Boas, 1907). Netsilik Inuit shamans also receive a headdress along with their special belt when the initiatory period is complete (Balikci, 1970). On Nelson Island, male shamans, as well as other men participating in the men's firebath, wear caps made of birdskin (Morrow, 1984).

Various other garments are used to clothe the shaman (see Table 1). During performances, Netsilik (Oosten, 1976), Iglulik (Merkur, 1985), Copper (Overholt, 1986), Caribou (Merkur, 1985), and Baffin Land Inuit shamans (Merkur, 1985)

wear mittens. Kamiks are worn by the Iglulik Inuit (Merkur, 1985) and knee breaches are worn by the Mackenzie Delta Inuvialuit (Steffansson, 1913). Shamans in the Mackenzie Delta region may also be fully dressed (Steffansson, 1913). However, no description of the entire outfit was found in this literature search.

Accessories

Accessories are actively used in shamanic performances. Each item has a specific use and meaning, depending on the ritual performed and the group. Descriptions of these articles are rarely found in the literature relating to Canadian Inuit shamans.

Drums are often mentioned in the literature on Canadian Inuit groups. The relationship between drums, drum dancing, and shamanism, while often unclear, suggests that the drum was a part of shamanic practice. In Northern Quebec, Moravian missionaries forbade drum dancing because the events were closely tied to shamanism (Dewar, 1990). Drums were used by Iglulik Inuit. Separate songs were used by shamans and others (Dewar, 1990). Cavanagh (1982) notes that drum dances performed by the Copper and Iglulik Inuit ended in shamanic seances. Drums aided Iglulik Inuit shamans in performing various social functions (Dewar, 1990) such as healing, predicting the weather, travelling to the Land of the Dead, recovering souls, and performing for individuals to convince

| | Belt | Brow band | Mitts | Head dress | Parka | Hood | Kamik | Gut Coat | Blind fold | Head band | Knee Cover | Bird Caps |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Nets | X | X | X | X | X | X | | | | X | | |
| Iglu | X | | X | | | | X | | | | | |
| Labr | | | | | | | | X | X | | | |
| Copp | X | | X | | X | | | | | | | |
| Cari | X | | X | | X | X | | | | | | |
| Baff | | X | X | | X | | | | | X | | |
| Mack | | | | | | | | | | | X | |
| N.Al | | X | | | | | | X | | X | | |
| Kodi | | | | | | | | X | | | | |
| Nuni | | | | | | | | X | | | | |
| Kusk | | | | | | | | X | | | | |
| NorS | | | | | | | | X | | | | |
| Nels | | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| Beri | | | | | | | | X | | | | |

Table 1.

Summary of Eskimoan shamans' clothing worn by various Circumpolar groups.

Key:

Nets=Nesilik
Iglu=Iglulik
Labr=Labrador
Copp=Copper
Cari=Caribou
Baff=Baffinland
Mack=Mackenzie
N.Al=North Alaska
Kodi=Kodiak
Nuni=Nunivak
Kusk=Kuskokwin
NorS=Norton Sound
Beri=Bering Strait
Nels=Nelson Island

Adapted from Balikci (1970), Birket-Smith (1929, 1945), Boas (1888, 1901, 1907), Fitzhugh & Kaplan (1982), Hall (1992), Hawkes (1916), Jenness (1922, 1946), Merkur (1985, 1987), Morrow (1984), Nelson (1899), Obomsawin (1973), Oosten (1976, 1981, 1986), Overholt (1986), Rasmussen (1908, 1927, 1929, 1930, 1931, 1932, 1938), Remie (1983), Saladin d'Anglure (1983), Stefansson (1913), Turner (1894), Vastokas (1973), Whittaker (1937).

them of the sacred power that the shaman possesses (Rasmussen, 1929). Needham (1979), in his study of percussion and shamanism notes that means of percussion, including drumming, are universal when communicating with spirits.

> "All over the world it is found that percussion by any means whatever that will produce it, permits or accompanies communication with the other world" (p. 312).

Eskimoan groups using the drum include North Alaskan Inupiaq (Spencer, 1959), Mackenzie Delta Inuvialuit (Steffanson, 1913), Copper Inuit (Birket-Smith, 1945; de Coccola & King, 1956), Caribou Inuit (Birket-Smith, 1929, Mowat, 1975), Nunivak Yuit (Lantis, 1946), Point Hope Inupiaq (Rainey, 1947), the Netsilik Inuit (Birket-Smith, 1945), Baffin Land Inuit (Boas, 1888), and the Polar Inuhuit (Rasmussen, 1908; Steensky, 1910; Holtved, 1967).

In literature pertaining to Siberian shamans, descriptions of shamanic drums are extensive (Dioszegi, 1960; Dolgikh, 1978; Djakanova, 1978; Potapov, 1978; Graceva, 1978; Overholt, 1986). The Tofa shaman's drum is used for descriptive purposes. Other Siberian shaman's drums are remarkably similar, including the Tungus (Overholt, 1986), Buryak (Tugatov, 1978), Tuva (Djakanova, 1978), and Nganasan (Dolgikh, 1978). The shaman's drum is either round or oval and is covered on one side with skin. The spirits indicate what kind of wood and skin must be used for each particular drum. Cross bows and a handle are attached, as well as resonators to improve the sound. In some regional groups such

as the Tungus (Overholt, 1986) and the Nganasan (Dolgikh, 1978), the drum is decorated to match the costume.

The circular shaman's drum of the Copper Inuit is described by Obomsawin (1973) as follows:

> "A caribou hide [is] stretched over a bent white birch frame. Holes are made in the frame so the hide can be sewn on with babiche or sinew. Sealskin strips are placed over the sides to hold the sinew wrapping and the short 2 1/4" long wooden handle in place " (p. 89).

Masks are also used in Eskimoan shamanic performance, especially those groups in the Western Arctic including the Mackenzie Delta Inuvialuit and the Pastolik and Klikitarik of the Bering Strait region (Fitzhugh & Kaplan (1982). The use of masks is attributed to the close proximity of the Tlinget and Haida along the West coast (Eliade, 1972). In Point Hope, Alaska, the novice, before full initiation fashions masks that represent the spirits that he or she encountered, and teaches other men the songs and dances of the particular spirit. Shamans put on their masks when the spirit familiars appear and changes voices and attitudes to coincide with each (Hawkes, 1916). Eliade (1972) concludes that the function of the masks is to assist the shaman's concentration.

The Lower Yukon River Yuit and Nelson Island Yuit carve shaman's masks from wood, and they are non objective in style, with a pattern of concentric circles radiating from a central void (Vastokas, 1973). The Yuit shaman wore masks during Kelek, the final ceremony of the year. The masks revealed the shaman's helpers, or familiars. The shamans instructed the

carvers on how to make the masks. After the guests were invited, the masks are painted, as the masks only gain their power when they are fully decorated (Morrow, 1984). The designs depicted could be grotesque and horrifying. Conversely, they could represent animals, humorous spirits or fish, depending on who would wear the mask, and at what stage in the ceremony the masks would be worn. Masks were worn in the following regions; Lower Yukon (Nelson, 1899, Vastokas, 1973), Point Hope and Icy Cape (Merkur, 1985), Northern Alaska (Eliade, 1972), Nunivak Island (Lantis, 1946), Boothia Peninsula (Birket Smith, 1945) and Baffin Land (Boas, 1888).

Dolls and divination sticks are two other accessory items that are used in shamanic practice. Dolls are used by shamans of Copper Inuit (Jenness, 1922; Rasmussen, 1932), Netsilik Inuit (Birket-Smith, 1945), and Labrador Inuit (Turner, 1894; Hawkes, 1916). Divination sticks, used for drumming or foretelling the future are used by the Alaskan Inupiaq (Spencer, 1959), Mackenzie Delta Inuvialuit (Whittaker, 1937), Copper Inuit (Rasmussen, 1932), and Caribou Inuit (Rasmussen, 1930). Rasmussen (1930) describes the divination stick as ordinary in appearance, but having special powers. Descriptive information on these accessories is lacking, although the literature does suggest their existence (see Table 2).

| | divination sticks | drums | masks | dolls |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| N. Alaska | X | X | X | |
| Mackenzie | X | X | | |
| Copper | X | X | | X |
| Caribou | X | X | | |
| Point Hope | | X | | |
| Nunivak | | X | X | |
| Netsilik | | X | X | X |
| Baffinland | | X | | |
| Polar | | X | | |
| Lower Yukon | | | X | |
| Labrador | | | | X |

Table 2.

Summary of Eskimoan shamans' accessories worn in various Circumpolar regions.

Adapted from Balicki (1970), Birket-Smith (1929, 1945), Boas (1888, 1901, 1907), Fitzhugh & Kaplan (1982), Hall (1992), Hawkes (1916), Jenness (1922, 1946), Merkur (1985, 1987), Morrow (1984), Nelson (1899), Obomsawin (1973), Oosten (1976, 1981, 1986), Overholt (1986), Rasmussen (1908, 1927, 1929, 1930, 1931, 1932, 1938), Remie (1983), Saladin d'Anglure (1983), Stefansson (1913), Turner (1894), Vastokas (1973), Whittaker (1937).

Adornment and Symbolism

Various adornment techniques are carried out on shamanic clothing. Some of this adornment is steeped in symbolism known only to the people or the shaman of a particular group (Eliade, 1972; Overholt, 1986).

Iverson (1986) emphasizes that the visual constitutes a distinct system. This visual system follows its own rules, and the visual is not only a secondary form of representation that originates from verbal texts. There is inherent communicative value in all forms of religious expression, and one can learn the symbolism involved in decorative techniques.

Eliade (1972) notes that Siberian shamanic costume and accessories represent an almost complete symbolic system. While each region has specific methods for adorning the costume, there is a remarkable similarity in the types of adornment used between different regions of Siberia (Dioszegi, 1960; Djakanova, 1978; Overholt, 1968). Applied decorative design of the shaman's gown usually consists of tassels, plaits on the back of the costume (made of ribbons or strips of hide), and pendants (made of metal, small pipes, rods, and rattles). Applique, bits and pieces of fur, and small pouches are added to some shamans' costumes (Djakanova, 1978; Dioszegi, 1960; Overholt, 1986; Eliade, 1974). Overholt (1986) states that a combination of lines, circles and stripes is common on Siberian shaman's costumes. Metal objects, rattles, and mirrors are attached to the costume on occasion.

While decoration and adornment on Siberian shamans' costumes are documented extensively and in great detail, little attention has been paid to the adornment on Canadian shamans' dress. Some methods of adornment and aspects of symbolism were discussed in the previous section. Other procedures that pertain to the shamanic complex and clothing follow.

The Lower Yukon Yuit shaman's mask described in the previous section symbolizes, through concentric circles radiating from a central void or hole, a body of energy growing from a central point. This is also symbolic of the mandala (Obomsawin, 1973). The circles, especially combined with visions of the sun while in the trance state, blessed the shaman, and the shaman was considered most fortunate. Masks are also symbolic of the spirit familiars that the shaman employs. The design of the mask helps the shaman increase his or her concentration, therefore increasing the shaman's power (Merkur, 1985; Morrow, 1984). Masks are worn by shamans in the practice of their magico-religious beliefs; however they are also worn by other participants on ceremonial occasions.

Shamans in the Bering Strait region commonly use masks. Many masks use a contrast of light and dark colours, which symbolizes life and death, and warmth and cold. These are key issues in the shamanic performance in this region (Fitzhugh & Kaplan, 1982). The Pastolik shaman's mask from the Bering Strait region represents evil spirits seen only by the shaman.

It is made from bleached wood, has a twisted mouth with a toothy grin, and the face is splattered with brown pigment representing blood (Fitzhugh & Kaplan, 1982).

Saladin d'Anglure's (1983) study of a shaman's coat belonging to an Iglulik Inuit shaman analyzes some of the symbolism of the decorations. For example, the white hand prints that are found on both the left and right side of the chest serve to protect the shaman from evil spirits. The animals detailed on the left and right side of shoulder blade area represent the children of the earth. According to the son of the shaman who owned and wore the coat, no part of the coat was made by human hands. It was the spirits that constructed the coat for the shaman.

Amulets are worn by almost all Eskimoans for protection as well as the shaman. Since amulets are not exclusive of the shaman's performance paraphernalia, they will not be discussed extensively unless they are an integral part of a specific costume (Remie, 1983; Rasmussen, 1927, 1929, 1930, 1931; Birket-Smith, 1945; Merkur, 1985). Almost any item can serve as an amulet, since amulets do not derive their power from their external appearance but rather from the spirits that inhabit the object (Remie, 1983). Amulets are attached to the clothing, carried, or worn about the neck.

## Rites and Rituals Involving Clothing

Shamanic costume represents a religious microcosm.

Accordingly, it must be consecrated and it must be impregnated with various spiritual forces and spirits (Eliade, 1972). Descriptions found throughout the literature pertaining to beliefs and taboos involving the shaman's costumes must be followed. These social constraints ensure the success of shamanism and dedicate each part of the costume in the appropriate manner.

In Siberia, women usually sew clothing. The shaman's costume should be made by a elderly or youthful woman who does not menstruate. If there are no women available who fall into this category, the costume can be made by any woman. Purification of the garments through the smoke of certain plants is necessary in this instance (Overholt, 1986).

The necessity of preparing the costume is emphasized, there are few references in the literature to the actual preparation process. No references were found by this researcher regarding costume preparation by Canadian Inuit.

## RESEARCH METHODS

Ethnographic research methods were used throughout the course of this study. Touliatos and Compton (1988) state that

> in ethnographic studies the goal is ... description and explanation of the culture, community, social institution or social situation under investigation. They require the researcher to take part in the ongoing activities of the group and to establish very close relationship[s with the participants and capture their perspective. The researcher lives and works in the setting and becomes an "insider" to acquire a detailed understanding of the people and their activities and beliefs. (p. 232).

Ethnographic research methods were used successfully in various studies in clothing, textiles, and home economics (Daly, 1984; Litrell, 1980; Bosko, 1981). Litrell notes that

> if research goals of objectivity, holism, and naturalism are to be met by the home economics researcher conducting clothing research in another culture it seems productive to draw from the research approaches of both home economics and anthropology. (p. 308).

This thesis fulfils this goal by studying and documenting the factors influencing change in religious practices and ceremonial clothing usage on the Belcher Islands. Primary source material on shamans' clothing in the Belcher Islands used for this thesis included archival documents and artifacts found at the filed location. Informal interviews with present and former, Inuit and non-Inuit Belcher Islands residents provided valuable information. These sources provided information on shamanic attire.

Various methods are used to interpret data when ethnographic research methods are used, including qualitative

analysis. Qualitative analysis, according to Dooley (1984)

> is to organize the hundreds of pages of raw observational notes into a meaningful mode. The essence of this task is the interconnection of discrete observations within a small number of conceptual categories. It is analogous to a jigsaw puzzle. The researcher fits and refits the pieces according to a variety of preliminary models until there are no or few pieces left over and the fit seems subjectively and logically satisfying. (p. 278-79).

Within qualitative analysis, there are several techniques that can be used to categorize and decode information obtained during field research. One of these methods is attribute analysis. Attribute analysis includes identifying and recording style features, construction features, ornamentation of designs, symbolism, and rites and rituals involving clothing variations due to social and historic factors in Belcher Islands' shaman's clothing.

Data collection in the Belcher Islands occurred over a thirty-one day period. The researcher arranged to stay with a host family during the study. Seven days were spent at the summer camp on the north east side of the islands with the host family. Other community members came to the camp and stayed for varying lengths of time. The remainder of the researcher's time was spent in the community of Sanikiluaq.

Several key informants were identified by the host family and the Hamlet Council. Other informants were found using the snowball sampling method where the key informants were asked to recommend other individuals who would be interested in participating in the research project (Burgess, 1984).

Both participant observation and informal interviews were used in the field to gather information on shamans' clothing in the Belcher Islands. Participant observation can be defined as a "method in which the researcher spends time in the normal flow of social life in a setting, organization, or culture" (Sanders, 1974, p.158). There are different levels of participant observation that can be placed on a continuum, ranging from passive to active participant observer (Burgess, 1984). Participant observation in this study included living with the host family, participating in daily activities, and recording conversations, activities, and special events.

Informal interviews allowed the researcher to collect information on clothing used in shamanic practice. During the field investigation, daily activities and special events were observed and recorded. Data was recorded using photographs, detailed field notes and illustrations. Permission was obtained from informants to record their conversations and use the information in the preparation of this thesis (see Appendix 1).

## RESEARCH FINDINGS

### Shamanism

On the Belcher Islands, both men and women had the opportunity to become shamans or angakuts (Tooktoo, 1992). Shamanism is very old, as many informants remember parents and grandparents telling stories about the local shaman but the practice virtually died out sometime around the 1930's. Few adults in the community today have clear recollections of these stories. As children, they were prohibited from hearing the stories and other information that was passed around the community about the shamans. Participation in shamanic practices was solely an adult activity. Informants claim that they were sent outside to play and could not participate as they were "too young" at the time (Emikotailuk, 1992). This indicates that the knowledge of the subject matter and participation in the activities was restricted to specific groups of people. The restriction may also explain why specific information on shamanic activity is difficult to obtain from community members. Most participants who entered into shamanic rites and rituals or employed the services of the shaman have now passed away (Crow, 1992).

Fragments of the shamanistic structure may still exist as there are only two individuals who reputedly practice aspects of traditional religion. The practice itself is considered covert and unscrupulous. Some individuals feel that the practice today focuses on the needs and desires of a specific

individual, instead of for the benefit of the community as a whole, as it was perceived to be in the past (Crow, 1992). Individualized practice may indicate the residual remains of a witchcraft complex. The witchcraft complexes of the Inuit were strongly associated with shamanism. They were performed on an individual basis rather than on a community wide scale, focusing on the wellbeing of the individual rather than the community.

Informants stated that the attire of the shamans was the same as other community members (Ippak, S., 1992; Emikotailuk, 1992; Crow, 1992; Manuk, 1992). Elders cannot recall ever using drums, rattles, or any of the other common percussion instruments used in shamanic practice. Instead, there was a focus on vocalization through special songs, rather than percussion, to attract the necessary forces and spirits. They said shamans performed a particular song to call forth the spirits individually by name (Crow, 1992). This signifies the power shamans held within their inner self. They communicated with the spirit world without special objects or garments.

The strength of mind needed to be a successful angakut is stressed by informants. Shamans controlled several spirits simultaneously. One spirit was always naked, while another had a mouth filled with fur, having just fought and devoured some beast in another world. A third had a mouth filled with teeth like walrus tusks. To frighten an individual or the community, shamans used ugly spirits (Crow, 1992).

Contemporary Khikuktimiut play a variety of games to help pass away the long winter season. One involves selecting a specific individual to wear his or her parka backwards with head and face covered. The other participants stand in a circle around the individual. The individual spins around until dizzy, and tries to break out of the circle without touching any of the other participants (Ikaluk, 1992). This is reminiscent of rituals used by other Eskimoan groups where the shaman's head is covered, and he or she must negotiate to get out of the circle to commune with the spirits.

According to one public health nurse, there is at present still a strong belief in the spirit world and an association with the spirit world. There are frequent discussions by residents about spirits, and they are still an important aspect of their spiritual life. For example, some individuals prefer to obtain drinking water by melting snow, rather than using water collected by the hamlet from a nearby lake. This is because a youth drowned in the lake several years ago and it is believed that his spirit still remains in the water (England, 1992).

Khikuktimiut shamans were powerful individuals. The lack of specific clothing for ritual practice, combined with the emphasis on vocal rather than percussive transmissions demonstrates internal strength.

Today Sanikiluaq is an excellent example of both community and individual strength. The community has several

small entrepreneurial businesses. They placed a ban on alcohol, reducing the incidence of alcoholism. Family units are stable with large extended family support systems. One community member was given an Order of Canada and another is a former MLA. A third is an accomplished pilot. Other individuals helped negotiate Inuit land claims, the Hydro Quebec settlement and various other federal and municipal issues.

Magical Prescriptions

There are many instances of homeopathic magic, taboos and prescriptions used on the Belcher Islands. Some are still practised today. They are a fragmentary remainder of the traditional religious structure on the Islands.

Khikuktimiut on the Belcher Islands believed that pregnancy could be prevented if women kept their kamik laces tightly tied. If their laces dragged on the ground, pregnancy in the near future was inevitable. If a woman performed her chores with unbraided hair, an unexpected pregnancy could quickly result. Once a woman became pregnant, she must keep her hair braided until she went into labour (Cookie, 1992). Young women today have discarded this belief.

A pregnant woman was advised never to interrupt her work until it was finished. If the tasks were interrupted, false labour could occur. She was also urged to finish her chores quickly, and to run outside the home when she awakened (Ippak,

S., 1992; Ippak, L., 1992; Takatak, 1992). Both were done to promote a short labour and easy birth. These two practices are still maintained by some residents of Sanikiluaq at present.

Food restrictions are imposed on pregnant women in order to promote the health of the mother and fetus. Pregnant women were prohibited from eating whale flippers to prevent the child from being born with a crippled hand. Cooked, dried seal intestines were eaten without cutting them to prevent the child from being strangled by the umbilical cord at birth (Ippak, S.,1992; Ippak, L., 1992). Currently pregnant women follow no food restrictions.

For a successful birth a woman must have unbraided hair, and none of the women helping the woman in labour could be pregnant. If a pregnant woman went where another woman was giving birth, the labour would stop. With an extended labour, an experienced older person was required to run into the home, touch the woman, and quickly run out. These actions were said to speed up the labour (Cookie, 1992). Since most births now occur in larger urban centres such as Winnipeg or Churchill, many of the beliefs and practices revolving around the birthing process are no longer applicable.

## Religion

Today Khikuktimiut are exclusively Anglican. The introduction of other religions has been unsuccessful since

the mass murder in 1940 and 1941. This tragedy was due to religious confusion and it resulted in the community deciding to practice only one religion (Crow, 1992; Ippak, S., 1992). Successful evangelical groups in other parts of the Arctic are unwelcome in Sanikiluaq and are openly ignored when they decide to visit. Khikuktimiut's outright community based refusal has led many of these groups to cease their forays into this part of the Northwest Territories.

During the 1940's and 1950's, when the Anglican church was becoming deeply entrenched into the social structure of the Belcher Islands, the only minister available for residents of the community was in Great Whale River. People would journey over the ice bridge by dog team in winter and spring, or by kayak in the summer to attend worship services. If residents were unable to travel to Great Whale River, worship services were held in a tent or igloo without the Anglican minister (Ippak, S., 1992; Takatak, 1992; Ikaluk, 1992; Ohaituk, 1992; Arragutainaq, A., 1992). One informant recalls attending worship services in an igloo as recently as 1962 (Ippak, S., 1992). Although the current church is a warm, permanent structure, the shape of the igloo is still maintained (see Figure 1). The minister from Great Whale River visits the Belcher Island congregation several times a year.

Worship services were led by an elder, or by another individual considered qualified by the community. The

Photo removed due to poor print quality.

Figure 1. Present shape of Anglican Church still imitates traditional worship centres.

criterion for qualification was unclear. The leader led the people in song, p_ayer, chants, and story telling (Ippak, S., 1992; Takatak, 1992; Ikaluk, 1992; Ohaituk, 1992). Details of these activities are very difficult to obtain because residents refuse to discuss them. This may suggest there was a duality of religions, with aspects of traditional religion woven into the Anglican practice. The communities choice of a leader deviates from church practice. Singing and praying are a large part of many religions; chanting and the exchange of stories are uncommon within the Anglican faith. Informants clearly say that the lay minister, or leader of the worship

services, dressed the same as other people within the community (Ippak, S., 1992; Ohaituk, 1992; Ikaluk, 1992).

Today, the lay ministers embark on a six week training course that certifies them as lay ministers of the Anglican Diocese of the Arctic. Along with certification is the right to wear the Anglican lay minister's robes.

Men are the lay readers or ministers in this community and wear a full length, long sleeved black robe covered with a white, knee length, 3/4 length sleeved tunic. The sleeves of the tunic are much looser and less fitted than the black undergarment. Flannel shirts, T-shirts or other work skirts and pants or jeans are worn underneath the robes. Footwear usually consists of boots or sneakers. Upper body garments are not visible when the ensemble is complete. The outfit is finished with a deep blue band holding a grey metal oval pendant worn around the neck, which drops to mid chest level. The pendant is two sided. One side reads "There are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit" and the reverse reads "Diocese of the Arctic, Diocesan Lay Reader".

The concept of individual strength rather than the employment of objects for religious communication is continued by the use of ordinary dress worn by lay ministers outside the church setting. Only recently lay ministers wear Anglican vestments during the performance of religious services. However, great respect is accorded to the ministers despite clothing choices. This also supports the idea that no special

clothing was worn by shamans. Religious dress on the Belcher Islands is a western concept. Even the ministers today only adopted the garments at approximately the same time that they began to undergo formal education for the ministry.

Since the 1940's and 1950's, Christianity has become deeply rooted within the community. Several residents mentioned complaints of Satanic activity in the recent past and R.C.M.P. officers have confirmed these complaints. Some community members felt that current music trends were the cornerstones of the satanic movement. To stop the movement Inuit collected all heavy metal music and a public burning of the material was held in the spring of 1991 (Milne, 1992).

Religious Ceremonies, Past and Present

Weddings, funerals, and other religious events are celebrated by the entire community. Takatak (1992) explained the ceremony surrounding death in great detail. Traditionally, individuals were buried without the use of a coffin. The deceased was dressed in their clothing and wrapped in cloth. Seal skins and dog skins were also used to wrap the body if cloth was unavailable and before the arrival of traders and the Hudson's Bay Company. The body was placed on its back on a bed of moss, ferns, and various green plants. Sometimes, the body would face east. Some individuals, especially skilled members of the family, were buried with their tools. Stones were placed all around the body and used

as a support for wooden planks that were placed over the body. The planks were covered with more rocks. Ideally, if one rock was removed, and the wooden planks pushed aside, the body could be viewed within the grave. Care was taken not to cover the upper torso with too many rocks, for "when the time comes for the big bang when the bodies all rise, the body won't be able to sit up" (Takatak, pers. comm., 1992). Graves were not marked, but recently, community members have gone to the ancient gravesites and erected wooden crosses as markers (see Figure 2).

Photo removed due to poor print quality.

Figure 2. Mary Inukataluk examines traditional graves Christianized with wooden crosses.

Bodies were prepared for burial by immediate family members or individuals living within the same home as the deceased or the family. The entire preparation and burial process occurred in a very short time; the entire event would often be complete by the end of the day following death. Due to the scattered nature of the population of the islands, the funeral itself was often only attended by people near the gravesite, or near to the deceased's family. Prayers were said for the dead and there was much chanting and singing.

At present, the funeral service is performed in the Anglican church by the lay minister or minister. After everyone in the community has had an opportunity to visit the home of the deceased, the body is cleaned, dressed, and placed in a wooden box-type casket. The body is then moved to an empty house next to the church used solely for this purpose. Before the service the body is moved to the church, the casket opened, and the face exposed to allow participants to view the deceased. At the conclusion of the worship service the casket is nailed shut within the church. There is a processional with everyone walking to the cemetery where a burial service is held. At the end of the service all participants kneel around the open grave. The immediate family kneels closest to the edge. The funeral ends with all participants throwing handfuls of dirt and rocks from their kneeling position to bury the casket. There is a gathering later in the day to provide emotional support and comfort for the grieving family.

Most community members participate both in the funeral and the gathering.

In the past, there were no special outfits for the bride and groom to wear on their wedding day (Ippak, L., 1992; Emikotailuk, 1992). The minister from Great Whale River came to Sanikiluaq to perform the ceremony, but the participants would be dressed in their traditional skin clothing.

Today, wedding ceremonies are performed by the Anglican minister from Great Whale River. More than one couple often gets married at the same ceremony. The reason for this is twofold; one is to help defray the costs for the young couple and their families and the second is because the minister from Great Whale River makes infrequent visits to Sanikiluaq. Also, the Inuit are very social and enjoy sharing events with as many people as possible. This allows the entire community to get together for a big celebration (Arragutainaq, C.,1992).

Brides and grooms try to dress in a "southern" style, with the bride often wearing a full length gown and the groom wearing a suit or a tuxedo. Brides often wear bright colours including pinks, yellows, and lavenders. Some wear white wedding gowns. Clothing is often passed from one individual to another, mail ordered, or rented from shops in Northern Quebec. Some brides make their own dresses, purchasing their material from either Mitaq Co-op, Hudson's Bay Company Northern Stores, the newly developed Eiderdown Shop, or Sears mail order (Arragutainak, C., 1992).

Friends and families attending the wedding dress in a combination of western clothing including shirts, trousers, and dresses. They also wear traditional kamiks and plaid head scarves. Women with small children wear the amautik with the children tucked inside. They also carry their infants in a plaid shawl folded and wrapped around the body.

## Clothing

Detailed information on traditional clothing used by the Inuit of the Belcher Islands and Northern Quebec, is presented by Saladin d'Anglure (1984), Boas (1901), Oakes (1991a; 1991b; 1991c; 1991d), Hawkes (1916) and Turner (1894). Information on decoration, adornment and the evolutions of transitional clothing are discussed in this section.

### Outer Garments

In addition to the traditional parka, pants, and boots that hunters wore, men used a black, dehaired sealskin pouch-like knapsack. The article measured approximately 14 inches by 14 inches square (35.5 cm by 35.5 cm). The back of the knapsack extended over the front, covering the opening and acting as the only closure. Shoulder straps were attached to the back panel. Men used this knapsack to transport supplies such as shotgun shells, meat and other game they had acquired through the hunt, and tobacco (Emikotailuk, 1992).

A construction technique for the preparation of the soles of kamiks was demonstrated. The sole was measured and cut out as for a regular kamik. Before being attached to the rest of the sealskin, very thin strips of haired sealskin were sewn from side to side. Very little space was left between the strips. This thickened the sole of the kamik, ensuring a longer life, as well as providing additional warmth and traction for hunters (Ikaluk, 1992).

Resources for creating clothing were often scarce, so Inuit took many precautions to make their clothing last longer. The stress areas of eider duck parkas were reinforced to prevent them from wearing out and tearing. Eider skin parkas were often combined with cloth, especially duffle, or sealskin. The back yoke, cuffs, sleeve, and upper bodice were reinforced to lend strength and stability to the finished garment. In these instances, the feathers were always worn to the outside of the garment (Ippak, S., 1992; Ippak, L., 1992; Takatak, 1992).

Gender differences were found in eider skin clothing. Male eider ducks were used in men's garments, while female eider ducks were used for women's garments. When eider was scarce the gender restrictions were lifted (Crow, 1992; Ikaluk, 1992).

## Decoration and Adornment

Besides the use of various fur trims such as dog, fox,

and weasel to ornament, strengthen, or provide additional protection from the elements Khikuktimiut also used other materials for ornamentation and decoration. Decoration of clothing was usually limited to the women's amautik tails, but one informant remembers a man wearing a parka trimmed with melted aluminum beads. Children wore their clothing similar to that of adults. Little girls wore decorated parkas and little boys wore plain ones. Use of decoration increased with the availability of cloth, because the Inuit felt that applied beadwork and decoration to skin parkas would weaken the material and cause the parka to tear. Today, the cloth amautik is decorated with appliqued rick rack rather than beads.

Before trade goods such as beads and cloth were available various types of metal objects were used for embellishment. Spoons were sometimes used as tassels at the back of the tail. Aluminum, tin, cooking pots, and shot gun shells, were be melted down and made into beads. A wooden spoon was used to shape the molten metal into a small oval shape. A needle or small bone was inserted to make a hole for fastening the completed bead. When the metal had cooled, the needle was be removed (Tooktoo, 1992; Takatak, 1992; Emikotailuk, 1992; Ikaluk, 1992; Ohaituk, 1992) .

Bead-like decorations that were reserved exclusively for the women's sealskin amautik were made from bones found in the head of the codfish. The edge of both the front and the back

tail were trimmed with these small bones. The bones were fastened by tightly sewing the bones over top as they had no holes, or by using a mouth drill to create a small hole, and then sewing it onto the parka (Emikotailuk, 1992).

After increased contact with non-natives, seed and pony beads were acquired through trade or purchase, and used as the primary form of decoration on amautiks. Strips of cloth and rick rack were also used, sometimes in combination with beads and sometimes alone. Decorative patterns were linear and symmetrical. Elders recall hearing of floral patterns used as decoration, but no one could describe the patterns in detail.

Factors Influencing Transitional Clothing Use.

There are several factors that are responsible for the shift from traditional clothing practices to transitional clothing and finally to western clothing currently used by Inuit in Sanikiluaq. The factors include: the shift from a subsistence society towards a hunting and trapping society; the establishment of the Hudson's Bay trading post; R.C.M.P. involvement in the social well-being of the residents; the tuberculosis epidemic; the miners and geologists that came to the islands; and more recently, the establishment of social services.

When the Hudson's Bay Company established a permanent post on Belcher Island, trade goods were frequently employed for summer clothing, while seal and eider were still used for

winter wear. Families brought in skins for trade or credit at the post, and acquired cloth and sundry items. Choices were limited, and due to cost, reserved almost exclusively for the good hunters in the community. The post carried one bolt of canvas, one bolt of duffle, a few bolts of cloth for women to make dresses, and a few manufactured clothing choices (Crow, 1992).

Members of the R.C.M.P. posted to the region in the following the occurrence of the murders were concerned about some of the residents. Upon discovery of the murders on the Belcher Islands in 1941, the perpetrators were removed from the Belcher Islands, ordered to stand trial in Moose Factory, and convicted. This left the families of these men and women in severe hardship. Not only were their spouses and key support member removed from them, but they were left to their own resources to provide food, clothing and shelter for their families.

The government had already taken a concern with the availability of clothing for the natives on the Belcher Islands in 1941. Correspondence from R.C.M.P. detachments to headquarters indicate that officers that had visited the islands felt a need for more appropriate clothing for the Inuit.

> "It is requested that a supply of discarded Army clothing, similar to that supplied to the Department for distribution to the Eskimo of the Belcher islands on my patrol to that point during the coming summer.
>
> Only materials available to the Eskimo of the

> islands [sic] for making Eider Duck and Seal Skins, except that purchased from the trading post.
>
> Last Summer when I was at the Islands some of the natives were wearing their Eider Duckskin [sic] parkas in Lieu of proper Summer clothing and as the Fur catch was below normal last Winter (33 Foxes in all) I expect that conditions will not have improved.
>
> It is suggested that Army great Coats, which can be cut up and made into Parkas and shirts, Trousers, and socks be supplied."

(Martin, 1944)

Memo regarding the submission of accounts from Hudson's Bay Company manager to the R.C.M.P.:

> " Costs of clothing given to wives of prisoners taken "outside" $6.48. - All of the prisoners' wives were badly in need of clothing and I issued an order to supply them with certain items of clothing, such as print material and clothing material before I left the Belcher Islands.
>
> The flannellette [sic] was issued to them for their wives and children as the latter did not have enough clothes to keep them warm, especially during the influenza epidemic." (Martin, 1942).

Various other communication memos from detachment officers in the Moose Factory region were sent either to headquarters in Ottawa or to the managers of the Hudson's Bay Post. Many specifically asked that adequate clothing provisions be made for the residents of the Belcher Islands (R.C.M.P. file)

The provisions of clothing from R.C.M.P. officers may have created more interest in the use of the trade goods. While traditional clothing is more suitable for families living on the land, goods obtained from either the R.C.M.P. or the Hudson's Bay trading post were suitable for the new settlement lifestyle.

In the summers of 1954 and 1955, mining surveys on the

Belcher Islands brought more residents into the community, increasing consumer demand and available cash. The Hudson's Bay company responded to the increased consumer demands by providing more and a wider variety of goods, including a wider variety of fabrics and commercially made garments (Crow, 1992).

The bright duffles, flannel fabrics, novel textures, and discarded R.C.M.P. clothing was uncommon and welcomed by Inuit used to wearing skin clothing. A special status was placed on manufactured and store bought goods. One had to be a good hunter, or married to one, to be able to afford to purchase manmade goods. Fabrics, trimmings, and beads were generally unavailable to less successful hunters and became an indicator of prestige and wealth within the community (Crow, 1992).

The establishment of the social welfare system allowed all Inuit to purchase clothing and cloth items. This helped eliminate some of the status and prestige associated with store bought goods. The shift away from small subsistence groups scattered across the islands to one larger community led to a decrease in hunting. Hunters required less skin clothing when they stay in the hamlet.

Many women had less time to prepare and sew skin clothing. They began working outside the home, and became active in various community events. The influencing factors created a shift in skin clothing. Clothing trends shifted towards commercially made garments, or store bought materials

made into home sewn clothes. Today, manufactured clothing and fabrics are readily available to the community, either through the Hudson's Bay Northern Store, Mitaq Co-op, the Eiderdown Shop, or through various mail order catalogues.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDY

Contact with non-natives caused many changes to the traditional Inuit lifestyle which are reflected in their clothing choices and their religious practices. Generally this evolution occurred slowly, beginning with small amounts of integration, until the original society is eclipsed by western practises.

For Khikuktimiut, traditional religion slowly shifted from a shamanistic complex to one where Christian beliefs and doctrine became integrated to create a religious structure that carried values and dogma from both cultures. Fragmentary remains are still present of the traditional religious structure; however, it has become almost unacceptable to speak of these, and the community sees itself as primarily Anglican.

Khikuktimiut shamans wore the same clothing as other members of the community. The shamans depended on their inner strength to communicate with the spirit world and perform their magical functions rather than depending on various objects. When the Anglican church became established on the Belcher Islands, lay ministers also wore their ordinary clothing to perform services. It is only since the lay ministers must undergo a training program that special clothing is worn for religious practice. The Khikuktimiut feel that the strength to lead is found within the individual.

Clothing choices and fashion also evolved slowly. Man

made materials and trade goods were incorporated and combined with skin garments to create new looks. Although warmer, skin clothing did not carry the prestige and status within the community that commercial garments and sundry goods did. At first, most of residents only used manufactured goods to adorn their garments or to add strength to them, but over time, the western style of dress totally replaced skin clothing.

This research has identified some factors that have helped to cause these changes. More research is needed to identify Canadian Inuit ceremonial clothing usage and religious. Integration of Euro-Canadian customs and habits with traditional practices lead to both new clothing fashions and modified religious services.

A continuation of this study using ethnohistorical methods would be beneficial. There are numerous museums across Canada that contain clothing artifacts from the Belcher Islands. These include the Museum of Civilization, Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature, University of Manitoba, and the Glenbow Museum. The Hudson's Bay Archives in Winnipeg, Manitoba, may also indicate the types of clothing worn and purchased on the islands during the transitional period from 1940 to the present day.

Extensive research was done in the 1970's by members of Laval University. Residents now deceased who were key participants in the study were also the keepers of the stories and legends surrounding this area. Any references to shamans

and their activities might be found within the notes of this study and would be a worthwhile exploration.

This type of study could be performed with various Inuit groups across Canada. This would further add to the body of knowledge that exists on shamans and shamans' clothing in northern Canada. Furthermore, studies such as these allow traditional aspects of life that are rapidly disappearing to be recorded.

Comparative studies between two or more groups that have the same cosmological structure would be useful to determine the effects that contact with non-natives and the establishment of trading posts have on their traditional religions.

Aspects of traditional life should be recorded within various Inuit groups across Canada, including a further exploration of the Khikuktimiut of the Belcher Islands. These could include folklore, games, music, other recreational activities, hunting, food, clothing, and arts and crafts. It should also be recorded which of these aspects are still commonly produced or performed, and how they are been adapted and integrated into modern community life.

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# APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1
CONSENT FORM

TITLE OF RESEARCH PROJECT
Changes in Shamanic Clothing in Sanikiluaq, 1900-1992.

INVESTIGATOR
Debbie Caseburg

CONSENT

I wish to learn about what kind of clothing shamans wore in the past and today. If you would like to help me in my study, and wish to have your name used in my publications, please sign this form.

Name used in publications:

Yes_____

Name of Participant_____

Signature _____

Signature of Investigator _____

Date _____

If you do not wish to have your name used, please sign here. Your confidentiality will be maintained.

Name used in publications:

No_____

Name of Participant_____

Signature _____

Signature of Investigator _____

Date _____

Thank you for your help in completing this project.

## APPENDIX 2

## CIRCUMPOLAR ABORIGINAL GROUPS

| GROUP | LOCATION |
|---|---|
| Inupiaq | Bering Sea<br>N. Alaska |
| Yuit | S. Alaska<br>Siberia<br>St. Lawrence Island |
| Inuvialuit | Mackenzie Delta |
| Inuit | Copper<br>Caribou<br>Netsilik<br>Iglulik<br>Ungava<br>Baffin Land<br>Labrador |
| Inuhuit | Northern Greenland |

(adapted from Damas, 1984)